

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Division of Special Education is extending invitations to apply for Special Education Improvement Grants. Topic areas for improvement are Elementary Achievement and Post-Secondary Transition. This is an excellent opportunity for districts to gain funds to provide access to trainings enabling implementation of various evidence-based 3-tiered models including Response to Intervention (RtI) approaches, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SW-PBS), and Professional Learning Communities (PLC). A list of approvable programs will be provided for these competitive grants.

Applications will be required in the form of an Improvement Plan submitted through the web-based system-ePeGS. Regional Improvement Planning trainings have been scheduled and are posted at: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/training.html>. These trainings will be offered during October and November 2008. Letters of intent to apply will be required by January 9, 2009. The deadline for application submission is March 2, 2009, 5:00p.m. A grant packet including all pertinent information is posted at <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/DataCoord/documents/08Grantpkt.pdf>

Please contact the Effective Practices Section at 573-751-0187 with questions.

## General Information

- Districts may submit grant proposals for both Elementary Achievement and Transition areas
- Funding requests may be for Communication Arts, Math, or Behavioral interventions
- Elementary Achievement grants are primarily for grades K through 5. Elementary Achievement funds can be used for K-8 only if the strategy selected progresses up from elementary school (for example, implementing RTI or PLC's in elementary and middle school). The emphasis must be at lower grade levels.
- Transition grant funding can only be used for Middle/ Jr. High through High School grades.
- The grants are competitive and only a limited number of grants will be funded. The amount of the grants will vary according to the size of the district.
- Grant application submissions to DESE are final. Districts will not have an opportunity to revise the grant prior to scoring.
- A list of allowable programs will be provided. If a district requests to use a program outside of the allowable list, a well-researched literature review showing proof of the evidence base must be provided before DESE will consider funding the request. Priority will be given to applications proposing implementation of three-tiered models of intervention with evidence-based instructional practices in academic and/or behavioral areas.
- The funding must be primarily used for professional development. There will be a cap on certain allowable expenses not directly related to professional development or strategy implementation.
- Districts who have previously received grants through DESE may apply for funds to expand a program included as approvable, or scale up previously approved programs.
- Grant funding may not be used to supplant initiatives currently paid for with District funds. For example-if a program is already implemented at the second grade level, grant monies cannot be used for materials for that program, though it could be used to scale up to other grades if the program is approved.
- Districts who previously attended the Improvement Planning training during the 2007-2008 school year are not required to attend the 2008-2009 training. However, there have been several changes to the training which include detailed improvement planning information, an updated scoring guide, and entering the improvement plan into ePeGS. Therefore, districts may wish to send personnel to the current training or at least contact their local Regional Professional Development Center personnel to learn about these updates.
- One year of funding will be granted to awarded districts.

## 2008-09 Special Education Competitive Improvement Grant Timeline

Item	Dates
<b><u>Training</u></b> Improvement Plan Development	October – November 2008
<b><u>Letters of Intent</u></b>	January 11, 2009
<b><u>Application Submission Deadline</u></b> Must be in the form of an Improvement Plan submitted through the web-based system IMACS	March 2, 2009, 5:00p.m.

### Award Amounts by District Size

Maximum Grant Amount	Enrollment
Up to \$75,000	30,000+
Up to \$50,000	15,000-29,999
Up to \$25,000	5,000-14,999
Up to \$17,500	2,500-4,999
Up to \$15,000	0-2,499

Subject: Improvement Planning Training

Source: Heike Imler, Interim Assistant Director, Effective Practices

Intended Audience: Superintendents, Special Education Administrators

Date: August 15, 2008

In collaboration with Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDCs), the Division of Special Education will be conducting regional trainings on Improvement Planning this fall. These trainings are designed to assist public agencies in developing a plan to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and meet the targets of our State Performance Plan (SPP) <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/SPPpage.html>.

Use of the IP process and development of an appropriate Improvement Plan is required by the Division of Special Education for (1) districts who are in their pre-Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) year as part of a self-assessment and (2) districts who wish to apply for grants from the Division of Special Education. These districts are required to attend this training if they did not attend the IP training during the 2007-2008 school year. However, agencies who attended the training in 2007-2008 are highly encouraged to send a team to this training as the presentation has been enhanced to include detailed improvement planning information, an updated scoring guide, and entering the Improvement Plan into ePeGS.

Improvement Planning (IP) is a process that will allow you to evaluate the strengths and needs of your special education program to meet the learning and behavioral goals of students. IP emphasizes the use of a stakeholder group to evaluate information, data-based decision making, and implementation of evidence-based programs to improve student outcomes. It is useful as part of a continual process to assess the district's ability to meet the SPP targets.

Districts are encouraged to send teams of up to five (5) members to the training. We request that each district send their special education director as one of the participants. At least one of the attendees should be the person who will be responsible for completing the district's Special Education Improvement Plan.

\*\*\*Registration is required. Please register through My Learning Plan by accessing the following link and clicking on Compliance Catalog: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/training.html>. Continental breakfast and lunch will be served.

For further information, please contact Heike Imler at [heike.imler@dese.mo.gov](mailto:heike.imler@dese.mo.gov).

## **Letter of Intent – Elementary Achievement**

Date

Name and Title

School District

Address

City, State Zip

It is the \_\_\_\_\_ school district's intention to apply for grant funding in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for improvement in the area of \_\_\_\_\_ during the 2009-2010 academic year. The district's improvement plan will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Special Education through the web-based Improvement Monitoring, Accountability, and Compliance System (IMACS) no later than March 2, 2009.

Sincerely,

## Letter of Intent – Post-Secondary Transition

Date

Name and Title

School District

Address

City, State Zip

It is the \_\_\_\_\_ school district's intention to apply for grant funding in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for improvement in the area of \_\_\_\_\_ during the 2009-2010 academic year. The district's improvement plan will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Special Education through the web-based Improvement Monitoring, Accountability, and Compliance System (IMACS) no later than March 2, 2009.

Sincerely,

## GRANT APPROVED PROGRAMS

### Elementary Achievement

#### 3-tier Models

- Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)\*
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)\*
- Reading First
- Missouri Reading Initiative

#### Evidence-based practices

- Reading Recovery
- Accelerated Reader/Reading Renaissance
- ClassWide Peer Tutoring
- Early Intervention in Reading
- Kaplan SpellRead
- Littlebooks
- Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)
- Start Making a Reader Today (SMART)
- Everyday Math

#### Progress Monitoring Tools

- AIMSWeb
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- EdCheckup
- STAR
- Curriculum Based Measures (CBM)

### Approvable

#### Expenditure Categories

\*percentage caps apply

- Salaries  
(ex. FTEs-not  
approvable/ stipends-  
approvable)
- Purchased  
Services  
(ex. Transportation/  
travel; consultant fee;  
course fee; speaker/  
presenter; printing,  
copying; trainer;  
facilities; catering)
- Supplies and  
Materials  
(ex. Curricula;  
evaluation supplies;  
store-bought food;  
professional books;  
student incentives,  
textbooks; student  
planners; postage;  
palm pilots)

### Post-Secondary Transition

#### 3-tier Models

- Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) \*
- Professional Learning Communities(PLC) \*
- High Schools That Work (HSTW)

#### Evidence-based practices

- Transition Outcomes Project (TOP)
- Dropout Prevention—Check and Connect

#### Progress Monitoring Tools

- Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM)
- Program Specific Assessments

\*To determine eligibility for participation in these RPDC sponsored trainings, please contact your regional RPDC consultant.

Proposed items not included on this list will require justification that describes the research base and the effectiveness for the particular purpose and target population.